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Thesis

Base Plan for Ecotourism Development in Intermediate Cities

Case Study: Damavand, Iran

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction and General Information

1.1. Introduction

Base plan is a strategy of planning for Intermediate cities which is in proof with UN Habitat. It's a model of development for Intermediate cities which means the cities with population of 20,000-2,000,000. Base plan could be a new approach in urban planning process in Iran. Containing a high amount of natural attraction, promotion of Eco-tourism could act as a tool for local development in its intermediate cities.

Preparing a Base plan and assessment of its capacity for intermediate cities in this subject is the main aim of this study. Believing this fact that Intermediate cities should not form part metropolitan conurbation, the main question is to define how a base plan could act in urban planning process for developing ecotourism in an intermediate city.

Tourism as an industry is known because of its high effect on societies and its role in socio-economic growth in the world. The economic role of tourism is the main aspect of that. Considering the value of growth in a region or city, made a motivation for hundreds researches and projects about urban and regional planning and tourism development.

Ecotourism development in Iran, as one of the countries of high biodiversity in the world, can act as a central and essential industry for development and economic- social growth. Each activity in the context of nature, must regards environmental regulations, standards and be in line with the principles of sustainable development.

In this study methodology of base plan will be prepared for this case study and principles and structure of base plan will be reviewed. On the other side, focusing on tourism and ecotourism, the potential of tourism and historical and natural attraction for this city will be listed. The physical facilities and promoting policies for tourism and ecotourism planning will be remarked.

In Methodology of Base plan elements like city size, form and density, territorial administration, Network of services and infrastructure, network of free and urban spaces etc... make a structure and this structure will be studied on the case study. Based on this structure, documents of Base plan and its map will be prepared. Literature review in this project is used to define tourism spatial and economic factors in the city. There are some facilities and requirements which should be considered in planning process of the city. Damavand is an intermediate city with distance of 65 km from Tehran, capital of Iran. This city has a high potential of Ecotourism and Agro-tourism. Also, considering its proximity to Tehran with the population of 12 million and recreational need of the capital, Damavand could change as the city which is prepared as the destination for tourists and especially for eco-tourists.

In this study important urban projects of Damavand from 10 years ago will be reviewed and highest priority projects for next 10 years will be predicted in the documentation of Base plan. The

qualitative and quantitative factors related to future plan of the city will be evaluated. Finally the result of tourism facility assessment and guidelines will be shown on the map of base plan and its documents.

1.2. Aim and objectives

Aim

The main aim of this study is preparing the base plan for an intermediate city so that main factors for ecotourism development could be observed. Ecotourism is a type of tourism industry based on natural attractions could be a promoter for socio-economic growth for intermediate cities. The use of base plan towards ecotourism development could be a model for planning for this type of cities towards ecotourism development. Therefore capacity and potential of base plan with this purpose will be evaluated.

Objectives

- Definition the main abilities of base plan towards the local development
- Showing that how base plan could act as a tool for long-term urban planning
- Presentation of base plan as a model for ecotourism development which shows how an object like ecotourism development could be involved in Base plan.
- Analytical evaluating of base plan capacity in line with subjective developments like ecotourism development.
- A preparation between current planning system and Base plan could be made.
- Focusing on base plan in comparison with previous method of planning in this city (general-master plan and comprehensive plan)

1.3. Methodology

- At first, Literature review which mentioned above is used to define theoretic structure of the project. References in the subjects of Tourism planning, management and development, also development strategies for Intermediate cities and Base plan make basic structure.
- Review of existing plan of Damavand which is known as “General plan” and also study on that for determination of its capacity, and its characteristics, its potential for Ecotourism, Agro-tourism and other aspects of tourism for this city which are necessary for planning. There are some facilities and factors which should be considered in urban planning process.
- Interviews with councilors, municipality members and professional urban architects could be used in this part.

– After collecting necessary information about case study, map of base plan and its documents will be prepared.

– In continue, the Base plan based on its especial method which is a model focusing the development of intermediate cities will be prepared. Methodology of Base plan in general concludes some elements as the principals:

- Definition of city size and form
- City size and density
- City and its urban hinterland
- Network of services and infrastructure
- network of free spaces and green areas
- level of urban factors
- Government or territorial administration
- Annual municipal budget
- Type of intermediate city
- Economic activities
- Housing
- Definition of monuments or elements which are or make symbol for the city

In final by analyzing the information of case study and using these mentioned elements a structure will be prepared. Based on this structure, documents of Base plan and its map will be made by emphasizing on ecotourism development.

1.4. Executive Summary of the National General Plan

Planning system in Iran classified according to its scale that has categorized into four categories, which are (1) National Plan, (2) Territorial Plan, which consist of one or more province, (3) Regional Plan, which covers a county with one or more cities and towns, and also covers urban planning of metropolitans, and (4) Local Plan, which includes a city, town, and/or rural areas.

1.4.1. National Comprehensive/Master Plan

National Plan has been defined in law as National Comprehensive/Master Plan, which includes development plan of the country according to national and economical aims and objectives base on resources, capacities, facilities, populated areas (urban and rural), urban growth boundaries for existing and future cities, industrial and agricultural zones, touristic areas. Also national plan should affect the relation and organization of public and private development programs (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 1974).

According to National Comprehensive/Master Plan in Iran 5 objective as priorities have been identified for national urban planning and management purpose. These 5 priorities are listed here:

1. Defining the place of future cities, considering limitation factors such as lack of water resources.
2. Determining the capacity of current and future cities, and planning of strategic population distribution.
3. Provide and development of necessary land policies and regulations for management, lead, and control of urbanization.
4. Identifying priorities of cities and towns according to industrial activities, agriculture, tourism, history, services and the multi-functional cities.
5. Evaluation of connection of current and future cities in territorial and nationalScale

1.4.2. National Land-Use Plan (Prepared by Management and Planning Organization)

National land use plan contains strategies to determine the spatial distribution of population and activities within the country to be used for the compilation and codification of economic and social development (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 1974). National land use plan has three main objectives, which are listed here:

1. Determine priority areas in development plans according to their capacity of population containment and activities.
2. Defining the role of various areas according to national division of activities and demonstration/distribution of activities such as agriculture, industry, services, and infrastructure.
3. Defining Prospects of employment and distribution of it in various sectors of national economy.

1.4.3. Development strategic plan (Prepared by Ministry of Housing and UrbanDevelopment)

The aim of development strategic plan is to locating the right location for futureexpansion of existing cities and estimating the location of future cities and towns, and also proposal for future urban networks, including demonstration of the size of cities and how it establish a hierarchy between cities In order to facilitate land management and providing services to the inhabitants, and also proposals for regulations on land use policies within the country (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 1974).

Territorial Plan

Territorial plan consists of two scale of planning, Territorial Strategic Development Plan and Province Development Plan. Territorial Strategic Development Plan covers one or more province and it is categorized according to size of the province areas. Currently Iran divided into 10 territories (figure 2) which each of them is consists of one or more provinces that are neighbors and

have similarities in geographical and cultural aspects. This plan prepared by ministry of housing and development (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 1974).

Regional Plan

Regional Plan, which also refers to Regional Comprehensive Development Plan, aims to develop urban policies and strategic plans for urban and related rural areas where have similar characteristics in geographical features, social, economic and cultural aspects to provide effective interactions in economic, social and physical approaches. According to regional plan, the ministry of housing and development prepare Urban Complex Plan, which consists of a metropolitan and its surrounding cities, towns, and rural areas. This plan aims to provide a harmonic and united urban management plan for metropolitan regions (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 1974).

Local Plan

Local plan consists of two kinds of plan, which are (1) Urban Master Plan, and (2) Urban Spatial Plan. The master plan defined as a long-term plan which shows how to use the lands and regions related to residential areas, industrial zones, commercial zones, administrative areas, agricultural zones, infrastructural areas, coastal areas, airports and ports, historic environment, natural environment, touristic areas, and etc., also related policies and priorities will be defined and demonstrated in urban master plan. On the other hands urban spatial plan develop base on related urban master plan and shows the details of implementation of urban network and accessibilities, urban density, land management (include land boundaries and land use plan), spatial organization of the city, public spaces, property ownerships and developmental priorities (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 1974).

1.4.4. Policies and Urban Planning Structure

Current planning process in Iran is common for all provinces and intermediate cities. This process is summarized below:

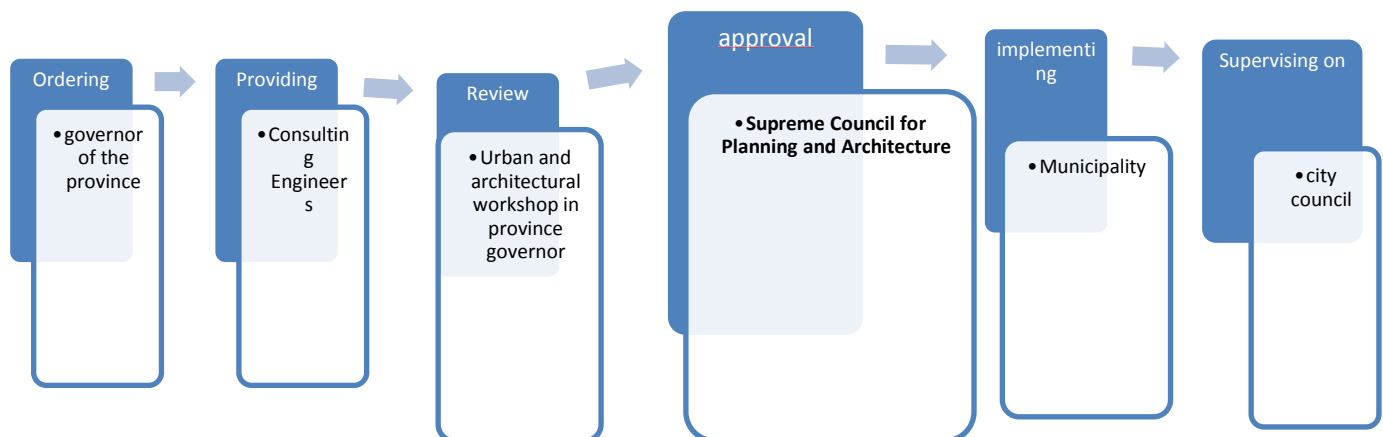
- 1- Ordering the General Urban Plan by governor of the province
- 2- Providing the Plan by an architectural Consulting Engineers (Private sector)
- 3- Review the Plan is done by the Urban and architectural workshop in province.
- 4- Urban General Plan: is supervised and approved by “Iran's Supreme Council for Planning and Architecture” and by confirmation of Deputy of urban development Ministry as the secretary of this council.
 - deputies of 8 related ministries (Energy, Urban development, agriculture, ...)
 - The Head of Management and Planning Organization

- The head of the Environmental Protection organization
- Head of Cultural Heritage and Tourism organization
- A member of Civil Commission as (observer)
- Head of the Engineering organization) without the right to vote
- Civil province Governor or his Deputy , Head of Housing and Urban Development of province, the Mayor of the city and city Council Representative City), without the right to vote.

At the end of process, Municipality as implementing body acts and city council as supervisor of municipality has a role in the phase of implementing of Urban General Plan.

A review on urban planning system is summarized on following diagram.

Figure1. Urban Planning Process for intermediate cities in Iran



The review on the planning process shows these problems:

- 1- The lack of an affective role for municipality in preparation process of the plan. Municipality as responsible body which involved in implementing projects, supervising and management could affect positively on preparation a more realistic plan.
- 2- The lack of public participation in Planning process and approval. At least city council by Representatives of the people could have right to vote.

Furthermore, in plan approval there is no right to vote for local authorities. A published interview with the mayor of the city confirmed this fact; as he told: “Many parts of General Urban Plan do not meet some needs of the city so that we asked another edition.”

1.5. Tourism potential and status quo in Iran

The landscape and biodiversity of Iran is diverse, which providing a range of activities from hiking and skiing in the Alborz mountains, to beach holidays by the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea. “Iran currently ranks 68th in tourism revenues worldwide. Iran with attractive natural and historical sites is rated among the 10 most touristic countries in the world in terms of its history.” (Wikipedia)

A number of tourism-friendly infrastructure projects are undertaken on the Persian Gulf island of Kish, which at present attracts around 1million visitors per year. Also in city of Mashhad, located in Razavi Khorasan there is a Holy shrine which attracts millions tourists a year. The majority of them are Iranians.

Before the Iranian revolution and the subsequent Iran–Iraq War, tourism was characterized by significant numbers of visitors traveling to Iran for its diverse attractions, boasting cultural splendors and a diverse and beautiful landscape suitable for a range of activities. Tourism declined dramatically during the Iran–Iraq War in the 1980s. Based on statistics, since the Iranian revolution in 1979, the majority of visitors to Iran have been religious pilgrims and business people. Official figures do not distinguish between those travelling to Iran for business and those coming for pleasure, and they also include a large number of diaspora Iranians returning to visit their families in Iran or making pilgrimages to holy Shia sites in Mashhad and elsewhere. Domestic tourism in Iran is more popular than international tourism. Despite the international tensions, the government continues to project strong rises in visitor numbers and tourism revenue over the forecast period, and to talk of projects to build an additional 100 hotels, is an example towards expanding its currently limited stock.

In recent years, 235 hotels, hotel apartments, motels and guesthouses have become operational nationwide. As at 2010, 400 hotels and 200 hotel apartments are under construction nationwide. Some 66 percent of these projects are underway in provinces of Tehran, Gilan, Mazandaran, Razavi Khorasan and Isfahan.

1.5.1. The Role of Tourism on Economy of Iran

World ranking (out of 184 countries) and Relative importance of Travel and Tourism total contribution to GDP of Iran is shown below.

Figure2. Iran in World Ranking of Tourism (World travel and tourism council, 2012)

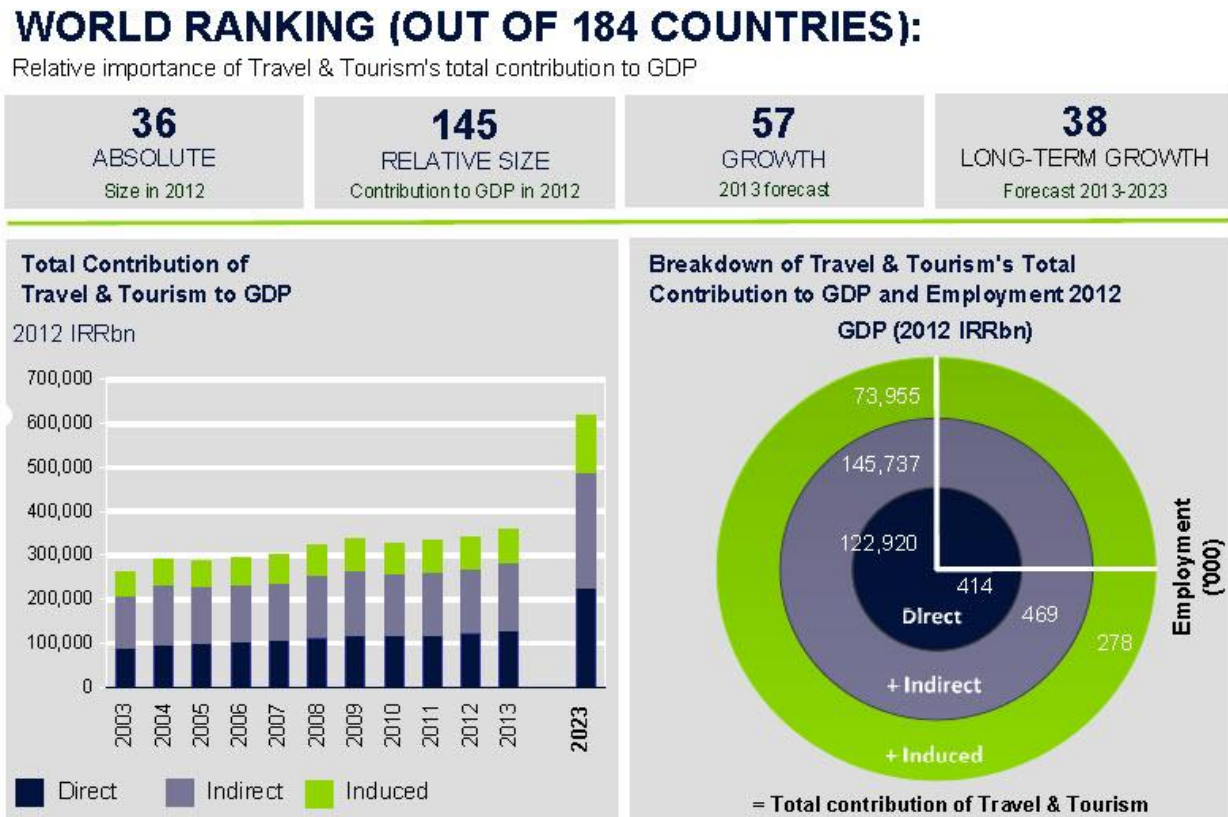
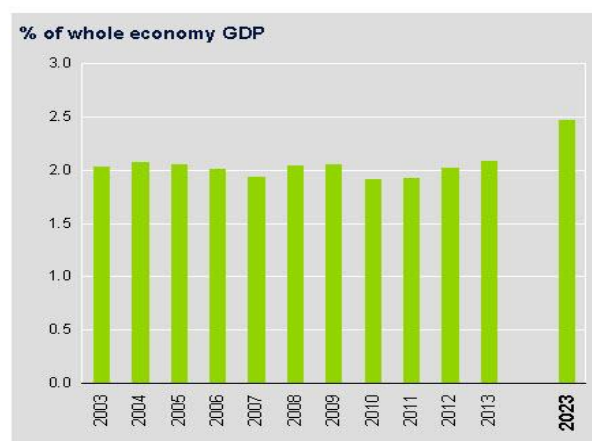


Figure3. Direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP (World travel and tourism council, 2012)



Domestic travel spending generated 81.3% of direct Travel & Tourism GDP in 2012 compared with 18.7% for visitor exports (ie foreign visitor spending or international tourism receipts). In summary the economic role of tourism in Iran is growing up but its ranking in the world by considering its ranking of attractions is capable to rise.

1.5.2. Organization of Cultural Heritage and Tourism

Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization is responsible for the establishment, development and operation of tourism facilities in Iran, planning for the repair or extension of tourism facilities through direct investment or providing loans to the private sector or entering into partnership with the private sector, issuing licenses and supervising the establishment and administration of hotels and restaurants and travel agencies and qualification and rating of these units. Investment in Iran's free trade zones is exempt from taxes for up to 20 years.

Area considered for further expansion in the tourism sector in Iran are eco-tourism, coastlines, restoration of historical relics, handicraft townships, and health tourism (e.g. water therapy). 30,000 people come to Iran each year to receive medical treatment (2012).

Officials state that Iran has in recent years earned about US\$1bn a year from tourism.^[2] Close to 1.8% of national employment is generated in the tourism sector. Weak advertising, unstable regional conditions, a poor public image in some parts of the world, and absence of efficient planning schemes in the tourism sector have all hindered the growth of tourism.

Iran's '20-Year Vision' predicted investment of over \$32 billion in the country's tourism sector and targets 20 million tourists by 2025. In order to encourage domestic and foreign direct investment in this sector, the 50 per cent tax exemption previously granted to tourism enterprises has been extended to include five-star hotels. Tariffs for utilities comply with industrial ones.

Considering the existence of this organization, tourism development plan for a city could be planned by ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

1.5.3. Tourism Market

The most up-to-date figures from the World Tourism Organization for the origin of visitors to Iran show that building up visitors from the Islamic and wider Asian world will have to start from a low base. Around three-quarters of those entering Iran in 1999 came from Europe. Of those, as might be expected, only a minority were from western European countries.

Figure4. Beach front on Kish Island, Wikipedia



According to Iranian officials, about 1,659,000 foreign tourists visited Iran in 2004 - although government statistics don't distinguish between tourism, business and religious pilgrims; most came from Asian countries, including the republics of Central Asia, while a small share (about 10%) came from North America and the European Union including Germany, Italy, Bulgaria, France, Belgium. The most popular tourist destinations are Esfahan, Mashhad, and Shiraz. There is undoubtedly great scope for increased visitors from the Islamic world, and possibly also from non-Muslim countries with which Iran is developing business and political links, such as China and India. (Wikipedia)

The majority of the 300,000 tourist visas granted in 2003 were obtained by Asian Muslims, who presumably intended to visit important pilgrimage sites in Mashhad and Qom. Several organized tours from Germany, France, UK and other European countries come to Iran annually to visit archaeological sites and monuments.

From 2004, the country experienced a 100-percent growth in foreign tourist arrivals until mid-2008 when the number of foreign arrivals surged up to 2.5 million. Specially, there has been an enormous increase in the number of German tourists traveling to Iran in 2008.

The World Travel and Tourism Council claimed that business and personal tourism rose by 11.3% and 4.6%, in 2007.

Figure5. Cyrus' tomb lies in Pasargadae, a UNESCO World Heritage Site



Table1. International Tourism arrival and receipts, (Source: EIU)

Year	2004	2005	2006
International tourism, arrivals ('000)	1,656	1,720	1,769
International tourism, receipts (US\$ m)	917	971	1,022

1.5.4. Infrastructure and Economy

In the early 2000s the industry still faced serious limitations in infrastructure, communications, regulatory norms, and personnel training. In late 2003 there were about 640 hotels in Iran and around 63,000 beds.

In FY 2003 Iran had about 69,000 restaurants and 6,000 hotels and other lodging places; about 80 percent of these establishments were in urban areas. Some 875 restaurants and hotels were publicly managed by cooperatives and government organizations. More than 95 percent of restaurants and hotels had fewer than five employees, and only 38 had more than 100 employees. In FY 2002 this sector employed more than 166,000 people, 42,000 of whom worked in places of lodging. Of the 56,618 beds in all hotels, about half were located in three- to five-star hotels.

In recent years, 235 hotels, hotel apartments, motels and guesthouses have become operational nationwide. As at 2010, 400 hotels and 200 hotel apartments are under construction nationwide. Some 66 percent of these projects are underway in the provinces of Tehran, Gilan, Mazandaran, Razavi Khorasan and Isfahan.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Framework:

Tourism and Urban Planning

2.1. Tourism and Ecotourism planning and Development

In 20th century Tourism shaped as an industry with close relationship in urban and regional planning. Tourism is becoming an effective constituent of economic development programs. Between different aspects of tourism such as sport tourism, religious tourism, cultural- historic tourism, it seems that ecotourism which is defined as nature based tourism could be one of the most suitable types for development in natural and rural areas. Ecotourism is defined as *Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people*. Ecotourism principles are:

- Minimize impact on the environment
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect.
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts.
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation.
- Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people.
- Increase sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate. "(TIES, 1990)

Ecotourism as a growing feature of the global tourism industry makes positive contributions to the environmental, social, cultural and economic well-being of its destinations and local communities especially in developing countries. It is requesting brief attention to issues of functionality, sustainability and usability. Respecting environmental issues, ecotourism provides effective economic incentives for conserving and improvement bio-cultural diversity; it could protect the natural and cultural heritage and creates a long term solution for socio-economic development. Furthermore, by increasing capacity building opportunities, ecotourism is also an effective vehicle for empowering local communities around the world to fight against poverty and to achieve sustainable development.

The international ecotourism society (TIES) made a definition for ecotourism which is “a sector of tourism based on nature travel and including the principles of sustainability” and “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people” and cleared that “whatever definition is used, ecotourism should have a positive impact on both natural areas and the local community”. It summarized the sustainability of tourism in “three main aspects: Environmentally, Socially and culturally and Economic.

Donohue and Needham (2006) recognize six “key tenets” of ecotourism: “(1) nature-based; (2) preservation and conservation; (3) education; (4) sustainability; (5) distribution of benefits; and (6) ethics/responsibility/awareness.” Higham (2007) sees eight defining “principles and characteristics” of ecotourism; Cater (2001, p. 4166) reduces these to three: ecotourism should be “green,” it should be “responsible” and “must recognize the interests of all stakeholders.” Other authors, such

as Weaver (2005), have developed continuum of ecotourism types; in Weaver's case, this includes a continuum of hard and soft ecotourism, comprehensive and minimalist versions, and a model integrating both.

From a more critical perspective, some other authors; for example, Cater (2006), understand ecotourism not in terms of its internal defining characteristics, but as part of a wider Western colonial project promoting cultural hegemony and the expropriation of nature. Still others, such as Donohoe (2011), have tried to distinguish what comprises culturally sensitive ecotourism. Finally, there are those who argue for minimalist definitions of ecotourism in the interests both of "methodological consistency and comparability" across "different applications" (Blamey, 1997, p. 127).

Ecotourism development can act as a central and essential industry for economic- social growth in both, local and regional scale. Nowadays, rapid growth of ecotourism, made a high level of expectation among ecotourism managers about what ecotourism can produce, but there is also a great deal of concern about the challenges it creates.

Tourism has been frequently taken as an alternative Option to maintain the continuous development of economy in remote or rural areas where primary traditional industries are in decline. On the other hand, Tourism industry can act as a promoter for starting a local development process. Recently a constant innovation and changing approaches in provision of a local planning exist which has a point of high value in the field of ecotourism assessment and development.

In the field of ecotourism planning, Lindberg and Hawkins in 1993 summarized initial planning process to help parks prepare for tourism. The strategy has three phases: to assess the current tourism situation and potential; to determine a desirable tourism situation and identify steps to reach this situation; to write an ecotourism strategy document. The process described is intended as a reference for the planning process.

Lew in 2007 by review on tourism planning and traditional urban planning theory described the planner as "an agent of social change" and represented the subfield of urban and regional planning as the more narrow area of tourism planning. He states that there is an apparent lack of attention to the standard issues of (1) how planners should plan and (2) issues should be focused by planners in their planning efforts. These questions show planners deal with a complex of data and issues, including questions of what data or information is collected, how it is organized, and how the information will be used for decision making.

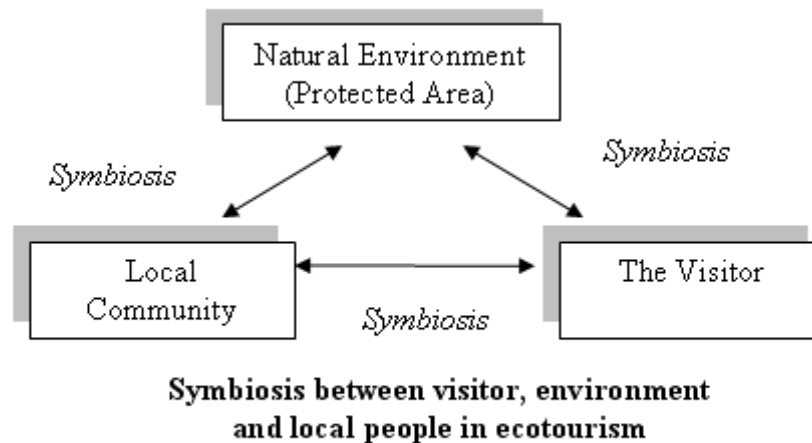
Standards for achieving tourism facilities via environmental law and interface design should be established for use, however, it remains to be seen how far ecotourism development are conforming to these standards, and where the conflicts might be between macro governmental aims and usability and this will not be achieved without considering community involvement in all developing processes.

Weaver and Lawton (2007) maintain that ecotourism satisfies three “core criteria;” namely, “(1) nature-based attractions as the main core; (2) visitor interactions with learning and educational activities, and (3) sustainability which explain that experience and product management should follow principles associated with socio-cultural, ecological, and economic sustainability.

In a development process, “local community” is a key factor whilst little attention has been paid to the role of community, in particular to the usability and accessibility of an environmental plan for local community and the role of local community in a planning process and other processes of local and regional development.

In discussion of ecotourism, environment is the pattern, visitors by non-consumptive use of the resources make benefit and on the other side, local community is known as third entity involved in. A symbiotic relationship among the three entities is shown below (Fig.6)

Figure6. Symbiosis between visitor, environment and local people in ecotourism (Ayob, 2003)



Regarding to public participation, some demographic researches pursued many different socioeconomic elements to determine which ones might have an influencing effect on developing process. For example, using segmentation analysis in a study of Scotland, Brougham and Butler (1981) identified significant differences in resident attitudes related to local and personal

characteristics, contact with tourists, and length of residence, age, and language. In a study of northern Wales, Sheldon and Var (1984) discovered evidence suggesting that “residents’ attitudes toward tourism development are culturally bound, finding that natives and Welsh speakers were more sensitive to tourism’s social and cultural impacts than were nonnatives and non-Welsh speakers”. In this fashion, in a study of New Braunfels, Texas, Um and Crompton (1987) found German ethnicity was a factor in policies toward tourism development, discovering that the more attached a resident was to the community regarding birthplace, heritage, and length of residence, the less positively he or she perceived impacts, with the exception of perceived adverse impacts on environmental quality. Although finding significant variations in attitudes toward tourism development by demographic subgroup, Liu and Var’s (1986) study of Hawaiian residents did not find significant differences in attitudes based on ethnicity and length of residence. In reviewed studies the rate of motivation and solicitude of local people did not considered.

In the field of tourism potential, Multi-criteria decision making tools (MCDM) are widely accepted to the researchers and decision makers. In this regard a variety of tools are used like: Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), Multi-attribute Utility Theory (MAUT), Superiority and Inferiority Ranking Method (SIR), Weighted Product Model (WPM), Weighted Sum Model (WSM) and Value Analysis (VA). (Malczewski, 1999; Jankowski, 1995; etc.)

Multi criteria decision making (MCDM) is a Technique for analyzing decision problems, generate useful alternative solutions, and to evaluate the alternatives based on decision maker’s values and priorities. “The general objective of these methods is to assist the decision-maker in selecting the best alternative from the number of feasible alternatives under the presence of multiple choice criteria and diverse criterion priorities (Jankowski, 1995). MCDM techniques have been used to solve various site selection problems. These techniques, however, assume homogeneity within the study area, which is not realistic in many spatial decision making situations like site selection problems. Malczewski in 1999 suggested that there is a need for an explicit representation of geographical dimension in MCDM techniques. The combination of GIS and MCDM capabilities could effectively solve this problem. Recently, Al-Amri and Eldrandaly in 2011 developed a new decision making framework for tourism site selection which integrated the capabilities of ES, GIS and MCDM (AHP). “Recommendations regarding the design of a good sitting methodology were observed into the framework. These recommendations include: a) identification of facility’s goals, b) providing quality analysis (i.e., logically sound, defensible, and useful for decision making) c) offering practical methodology (i.e., ability to conduct studies in the real environment with available methods and procedures provided at a reasonable cost and time), and d) documenting how local conditions are analyzed.” (Al-Amri&Eldrandaly, 2011)

In the field of tourism planning “Tourism, ecotourism, and protected areas” summarized initial planning process to help parks prepare for tourism. It defined that “Once a government has made the decision to develop its country's tourism, a basic planning process should be adopted that includes at least the following seven steps:

- study preparation
- determination of objectives
- survey
- analysis and synthesis
- policy and plan formulation
- recommendations
- Implementation and monitoring.” (Ceballos. L., H., 1996).

Also it emphasized that “*The carrying capacity of nature trails is a particularly important factor, and has biophysical, socio-cultural, psychological and managerial aspects. Three examples of nature trails from different protected areas: Doñana National Park, Spain; Penguin Island*”. Also “Ecotourism: a guide for planners and managers, Volume 1” defined that strategy of ecotourism development has three phases: “to assess the current tourism situation and potential; to determine a desirable tourism situation and identify steps to reach this situation; to write an ecotourism strategy document” (Lindberg & Hawkins, 1993). The process described is intended as a reference for the planning process.

There is a review on tourism planning and traditional urban planning theory by Alan A. Lew, 2007. He described the planner as an “agent of social change” and argues that “the more narrow area of tourism planning could be considered a subfield of urban and regional planning. In his research, one major shortcoming of tourism planning is an apparent lack of attention to the normative issues of “(1) how planners should plan and (2) what issues planners should focus on in their planning efforts”. These questions address the complexity of data and issues that planners deal with, including questions of what data or information is collected, how it is organized, and how the information will be used to make decisions.

In tourism planning Michael Hall found “in the mid-term, we see people staying on working holidays, short-term contracts, vacation or second home stays, medical tourism or for educational purposes. in the long term the short and mid-term visitors may be encouraged to move 'permanently' and be categorized as migrants, therefore further contributing their bundle of economic, social and intellectual capital to the original destination, although their own mobility to

other places will likely remain integral to their lifestyle and their relation to their new 'home', The attraction of 'temporary mobility' therefore lies at the heart of tourism policy.” (Hall, 2008)

Furthermore, in the field of recreation, the importance of cultural “Recreation and the environment as cultural dimensions in contemporary American society.” by Cordell, H. Ken and others, 2002, Standards for achieving tourism facilities via environmental law and interface design will be established for use, however, it remains to be seen how far ecotourism development are conforming to these standards, and where the conflicts might be between macro governmental aims and usability and this can only be achieved by considering community involvement.

A study on rural tourism development in China, showed a special developmental and operational approach, which has seldom been seen in other countries, is shared by both.

This developmental approach is prevailing in China’s rural tourism which is called “communal” approach for tourism development. Several essential traits of this communal approach have been summarized as follows:

- _ Village, or rural community, acting as the basic unit of destination, is “enclosed” and “sold” to the tourists as a single tourism product by charging an entrance fee;
- _ A special corporation is formed to take charge of the integral business of cultural tourism in rural community, regardless of the diversities in capital structures;
- _ besides the negotiated payments to those contracted households opening to tourists, a certain proportion of the revenue from ticket sales is shared by the whole community, through a capitalism cash distribution and a better community welfare system supported by the revenue;
- _ The locals still have the right to run their own small tourism business, but should be under the coordination of the special corporation. Admittedly, using this communal approach can help little in preventing or moderating tourism’s negative impacts on the host rural communities such as living costs, environment, transportation, local traditional culture and values, etc. However, given the current socio-economic situation of rural China, the communal approach may be an ideal choice for those rural communities qualified for cultural tourism development, because, firstly, this new approach may lead to a collective reallocation of the tourism revenue, which, more or less, helps every community member achieve his/her benefit-cost balance in terms of tourism; secondly, a single-corporation operation of tourism business is believed to be conducive to the self-support of the tourism program in the rural community; thirdly, the communal approach may improve the efficiency of tourism management by forming an all-covered economic mutual-benefit relationship in the community; fourthly, this approach also ensures the rural community a basic participation on benefit level.

2.2. Intermediate cities and urban planning

Intermediate cities are defined as cities with population of 20,000- 2,000,000. General reflection of intermediate cities is studied and shown in urban planning, globalization and urban function. Also evaluation of the program of UIA-CIMES, (intermediate city project in support of Union of International Architects) is discussed in 20th Congress of UIA in Beijing, 1999 and in 21th congress in Berlin, 2002. (Bellet & Llop, 2002)

2.2.1 Planning strategies of Intermediate cities

Considering the most population of the world live medium size cities, Josep Llop discussed that “At the end of the 20th century, concern for the social implications of architecture and town planning should influence the way we analyze the rapid growth of intermediate cities and how we deal with the professional challenges that they pose.” and mentioned that “Pronounced rhythms of development in cities bear both positive and negative consequences, because the process of «global urbanization» is not only associated with increases in the size of the urban population, but also with a major movement of economic activity from the country to the city. The main social and professional challenges lie in trying to discover new ways of affronting such problems as urbanization, housing, traffic and health care, as manifested in the new contexts of intermediate cities”.

Reviewing “Intermediate cities and world urbanization”, gives the structure of base plan and clears that “Base Plan will also enable the identification of the city's main needs for the next 10 years”. This could be the aim of this academic study. Also it emphasizes that “Intermediate cities should not form part metropolitan conurbation but they have to have their own place in the region or territory”. Focusing on capacity and potential of intermediate cities could able us to make a plan for increasing their own role.

As Llop declared “Intermediate cities do not exhibit many of environmental problems found in megacities by agglomeration and high amount of population. Also they are less competitive in economic terms than the metropolis and so they couldn't attract higher level function. They have less access to the main source of information and capital”. (Llop,1999). This reference noticed the importance of the intermediate cities and emphasizes its function and role of them.

In field of Globalization on intermediate cities Bellet and Llop discussed that “at the same time, small and medium-sized centers have been presented with an opportunity to re-situate themselves within the global network, because city size and scale are relatively unimportant within a context of globalization.” The dynamics and success of these settlements depend on some factors and the

definition of intermediate cities is always considered in the pattern of globalization and global network which made it different with medium-sized city. As the writers claimed, "This depends on: their geographical locations and possibilities for forming connections with other major networks and flows: small metropolises and urban poles in rural areas, medium-sized cities on metropolitan peripheries, the medium-sized city as part of a regional network or corridor system, and a series of correctors related to the socio-economic and territorial context: it is not the same to be on the periphery of the center as to be on the periphery of the periphery; the degree of social cohesion, cooperation and willingness of their main social agents the attention they give to the education and training of their citizens; the way in which local and regional institutions manage; their «milieu» and resources; their capacity to improve the physical and environments." (Bellet & Llop, 2002)

In relation with current project, they discussed that "the ecological design, planning and development of intermediate cities calls for a very wide definition of sustainability, which may be understood as a philosophy for developing intermediate cities. This philosophy requires a rough definition which must take into consideration the consequences of certain actions and decisions; sustainable development seeks to find a balance between human needs (rather than desires) and the resource capacities of intermediate cities. The philosophy of sustainable development may be conceived in terms of a series of principles and criteria that can be manifested in the following way:

a) Principles of sustainable development for intermediate cities:

- The development of intermediate cities should be locally conceived and not imposed from outside.
- The development of intermediate cities should be based on the sustainable use of their resources.
- The development of intermediate cities should provide for basic necessities, ensure secure living conditions and promote equity
- The development of intermediate cities should foster empowerment, encourage greater local control over resources, and promote the participation of the marginalized and under-represented)

b) The criteria for sustainable development in intermediate cities should be:

- A form of development which does not cause irreparable damage to either the natural or planetary system, avoids the use of non-renewable resources, does not pollute and makes efficient use of energy.
- A form of development that considers the community when it comes to taking decisions, that does not destroy social structures, offers no risk to health, and does not reduce quality of life.
- A form of development that does not reduce the value of property that diversifies the community's sources of income, and provides job opportunities.

- The aforementioned principles and criteria can, and should, be used as a basis for establishing a series of guidelines and objectives that can be personalized in response to the particular circumstances of each time, place and culture in which development occurs.” (Bellet & Llop, 2002)

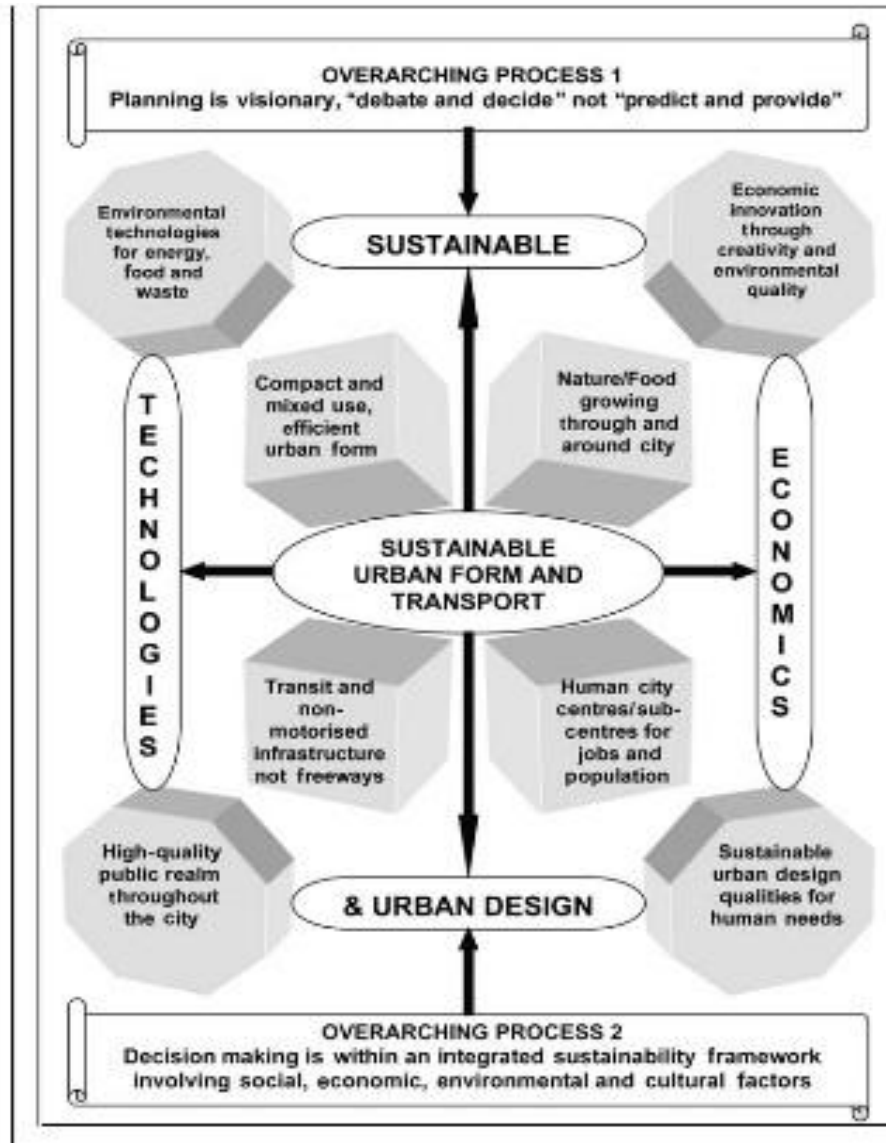
Also they emphasized that “Medium-sized or intermediate cities can and should play a more active role in counter-balancing the concentration and polarization of population, and in limiting the excessive growth of large agglomerations (megacities-megalopolis).” (Bellet & Llop, 2002)

2.2.2. Eco city and sustainable urban forms

Permanent development method in tourism planning means protecting from natural, cultural and the other tourism resources, in the course of constant usage in future. In the other term, concerning the fact that most part of tourism development depends on attractions and activities that are related to natural environments, historical traditions and cultural models of counties, in this case if these resources get abused or destroyed, then touristy places would not be able to attract tourists, and tourism industry would not be successful. (Jamieson and Sunalai, 2002)

Kenworthy discussed that making existing cities and new urban development more ecologically based and livable is an urgent priority in the global push for sustainability. He found “ten critical responses to this issue and summarizes them in a simple conceptual model that places the nexus between transport and urban form at the heart of developing an eco-city. This involves compact, mixed-use urban form, well-defined higher-density, human-oriented centers, priority to the development of superior public transport systems and conditions for non-motorized modes, with minimal road capacity increases, protection of the city's natural areas and food-producing capacity.” He summarized his theory in following model.

Figure5. Conceptual model of Eco city (Kenworthy, 2006)



Jabareen in 2006 made an analysis and identified seven design concepts related to sustainable urban forms: compactness, sustainable transport, density, mixed land uses, diversity, passive solar design, and greening. Moreover, it identifies four types of sustainable urban forms: the neo-traditional development, the urban containment, the compact city, and the eco-city. Cities are as complex as a living organism. Simply stated, one strategy on it's own is simply not enough to make an entire city sustainable, rather what's needed is a series of strategies. Beatley in 1999 defined eight overarching systems that need to work together to make a city sustainable:

- "Sustainable land use planning and urban form
- Innovative housing strategies

- Sustainable transportation and mobility
- Urban ecology and strategies for greening the urban environment.
- Recycling, up cycling and closing the loop of “stuff”.
- Energy conservation and renewable energy
- Sustainable building practices
- Green governance and economy”

These eight items should be considered and analyzed in all urban planning system.

All above literature make a motivation and a base of theory for working on Base plan in a case study in Iran. But the exclusivity of current project is emphasizing on ecotourism and its conditions which should be considered in the plan.

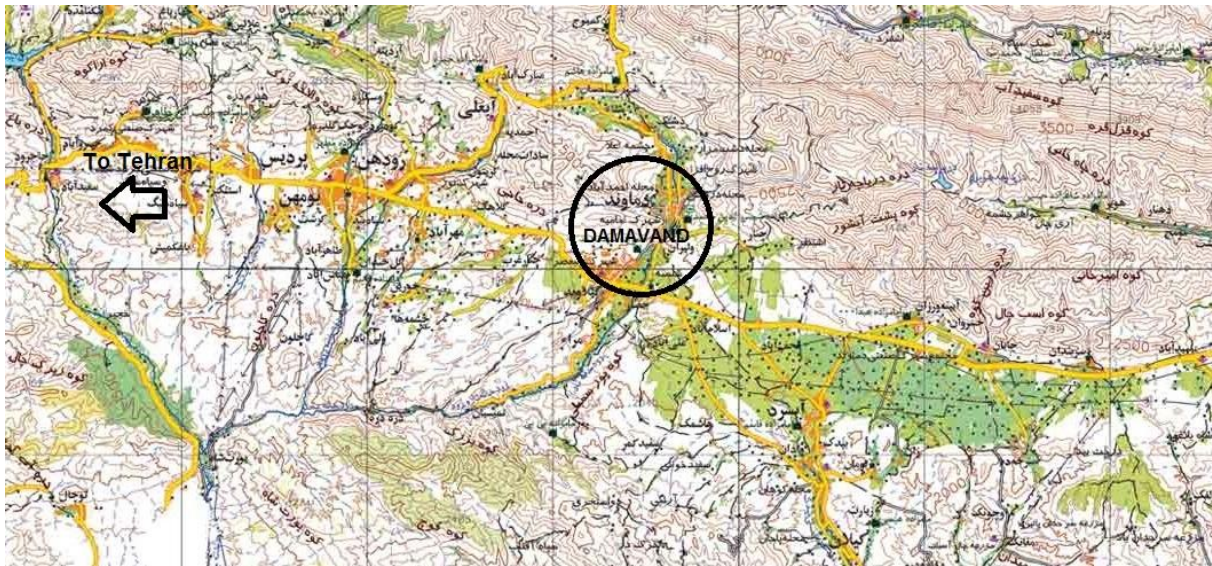
CHAPTER 3

Base Plan of Damavand

3.1. City of Damavand

Damavand is an intermediate city which is located in east of Tehran and in Tehran province with distance of 65 kilometers to center of Tehran. It is the capital of Damavand County. The name of city is the same name of highest peak of Iran, Mount Damavand. Current planning system of the city is General Urban Plan. In this chapter Base plan for the city by tourism development approach will be prepared.

Figure7. Geographical location of Damavand



History of Damavand

Damavand is one of the oldest and most ancient cities of Iran. Evidence shows human presence in this area from thousands years ago. Some caves have signs of Mithraism inside.

Damavand by land area is owned by the myth, having good weather and fertile land, also fantastic strategic location between the Caspian and Central Plateau made it important in the history. Thus, despite the frequent earthquakes in this region many monuments are still remained.

3.2. Executive Summary of current Urban General Plan (UGP)

In 2008 the general urban plan of Damavand was prepared by order of municipality of Damavand and supervision of Deputy of Minister and secretary of Iran's Supreme Council for Planning and Architecture. A study on its important recommendation for current condition and future plan are summarized below:

- Total predicted population for 2017 is 63,800. Total surrounded area in the boundary is 2188 ha, including defined land use and undefined areas (Area of reservation). Proposed gross density is 1.29 person/ha.

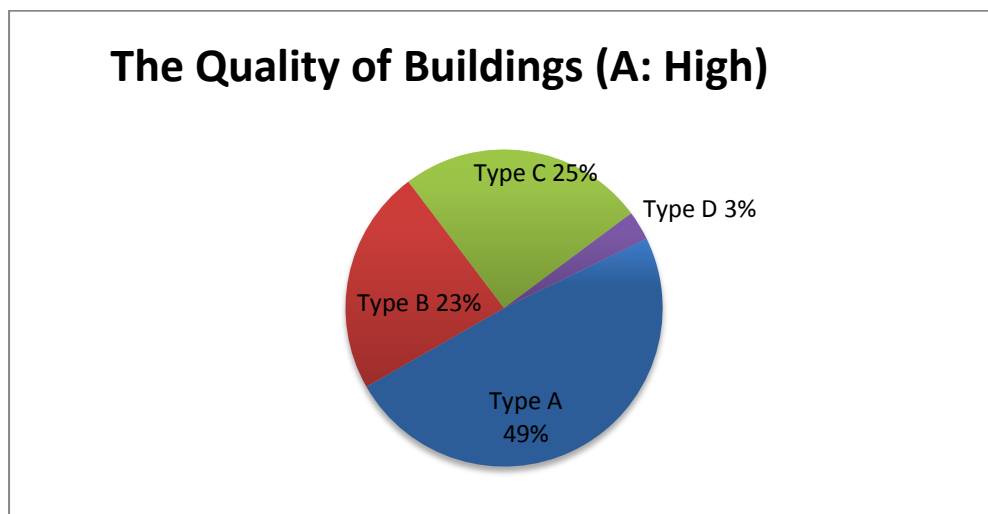
- Economic sustainable resources for the city, based on master plan studies the found that But what matters is effective January stable income source for municipalities and administered by the City and its developments. In this regard, what is indisputable and undeniable

Is the capacity of people in the form of cooperative arrangements that would their specific demands, including modifying existing law sand new laws from the NIA, Incentives to attract domestic and foreign capital in the form of participation and factual...

- Something that can lead to new and sustainable income generation and measurement capability Feasibility of the project profitable for defining the characteristics of the city and its surrounding environment will be provided by the possibility of participatory activities and use of People's capacity to achieve the goals of urban development plans

- Proximity of Damavand to Tehran, made a strong desire to construction in the city, possibility of the definition of tourism projects for the city and its surrounding environment capabilities etc. all of these items provide a suitable atmosphere for the application of this approach to obtain a new and sustainable revenue sources for the city of Damavand.

Figure8. Evaluation of the quality of total urban buildings (Census Organization of Iran)



As graph shows, considering the high percentage of buildings type C (Old), the tax of reconstruction, In GUB (General Urban Plan) predicted as a part of municipal budgets.

- About human resources of municipality it's found that currently approved Organizational Chart of Municipality does not meet the real need of Municipalities in human resources and employed human resources out of the chart is a legal problem.

3.3. Tourism Potential of Damavand

Tourism Potential and Tourism Attractiveness are used for description all valuable items in a region for attracting tourists which could be cultural, natural, historical, etc.

"Tourism Potential" is a widely used and accepted term in tourism domain, however, it sometimes create misunderstanding as potential expresses some territorial capabilities, which holds a little narrower domain. As prescribed by S. Formica the term „potential" may be replaced by "Attractiveness" which clearly indicates the relations between demand and supply of tourism.

Merwe et al. analyzed nature-based as well as man-made features in connection with tourism potential through a detail GIS mapping process.

Multi-criteria decision making tools are widely accepted to the researchers and decision makers for assessing tourism potential observed in literature study. Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), Multi-attribute Utility Theory (MAUT), Superiority and Inferiority Ranking Method (SIR), Weighted Product Model (WPM), Value Analysis (VA) and Weighted Sum Model (WSM) are some common tools used for evaluating the tourism potential.

In this research it is sufficed to prepare a list of attractions. based on Statistics attractive places are including 38 holy shrines, 27 castles, 16 historic homes, 18 ancient bathes, 4 natural caves, 7 shrines, 6 mosques, 4 Historical Monument, 7 Old Bridges , a historic cemetery. These monuments are dating from the sixth millennium BC (eight thousand years ago) to the early Pahlavi period (80 years ago). The majorities of monuments belong to the period of medieval Islam and are related to Islamic culture.

- Mount Damavand

This mount is in north of the city with distance of 25km. it is a potentially active volcano and the highest peak in Iran, has a special place in Persian mythology and folklore. It is located in the middle Alborz Range, and is the highest volcano in all of Asia. City of Damavand by vicinity to more than 11 mounts higher than 4000 meters is known as a city of Mountaineers.



- Shebeli Tower and Tomb

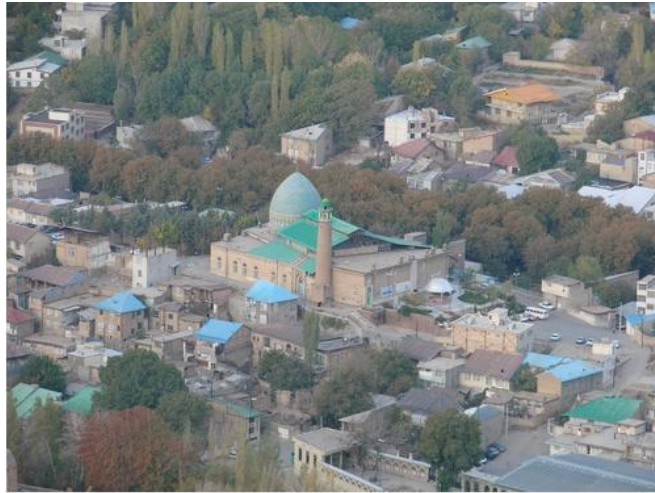
Shebeli Tower is a historical tower in center of Damavand, Standing approximately 10 m tall, the structure is a roofed octagon tomb of Sheikh Shebeli, a Sufi mystic. A *sardāb* (basement) also exists under the structure.

The structure is a remnant of the Samanid era, making it from the 12th century, at the latest, and is similar in design to extant structures in Bukhara. The structure recently underwent some preservation.



- Jame mosque (15th century)

The Congregation mosque of Damavand is an historical mosque in the city center built in 1409 CE, the mosque includes traces of Samanid architecture.



- Ancient castle of Golkhandan

The construction is approximately around 224 to 652 AD. The castle is located in the village of the same name, paved roads Roudehen-Tehran overlooking the confluence of two rivers. The style is reminiscent of Sassanian. The four corner towers around it for strength and has a better defense. The castle is located on top of a natural ridge, with a steep gradient leads to a lush valley nearby. More ways fence and built a tower and later Sassanid for tress of Islam and in that room, the hall and there is a water reservoir.

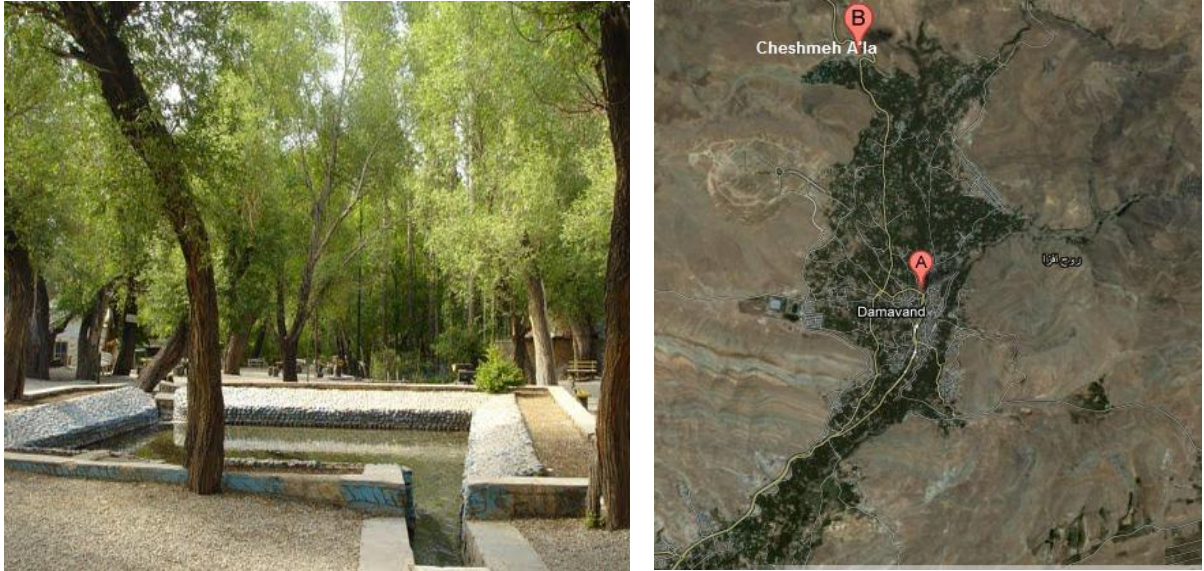
Sassanid fortress in the areas and there is a variety of pottery. It seems that the tower has been used for centuries.



- Cheshmeh Ala spring

This popular mineral water spring is located in the north boundary of the city and is close to residential districts. High water quality of this spring led to the foundation of one of the greatest mineral water companies in Iran which produces Damavand Mineral Water in this area.

Figure9. Cheshmeh-Ala spring



- Lake Tar

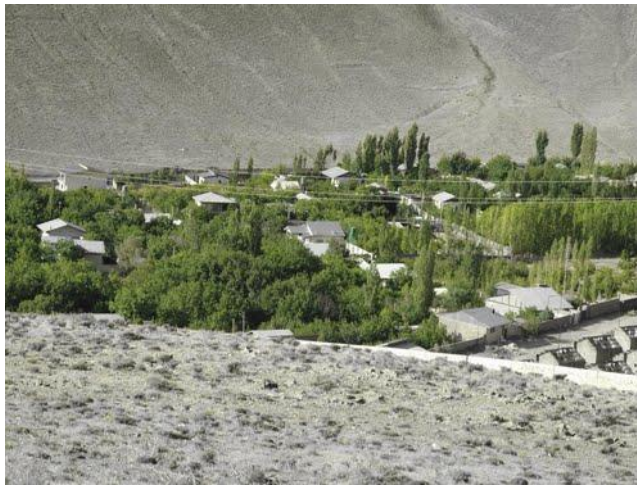
In the north-east of city, at altitudes above 3230 meters above sea level, high mountains without a valley made a natural cavity creating Lake Tar. This freshwater lake has a length of over a kilometer and its width is about 250 m. At the moment there are 2 roads to the lake, one from Damavand, and another from east of it, from Havir village.



- Ahmadabad Cave

- Village of Ureh

Green village of Ureh is a typical form of rural areas in this county.



-The possibility of paragliding

In some areas around the city there is a potential and possibility of paragliding.

- Agriculture and Agro-Tourism

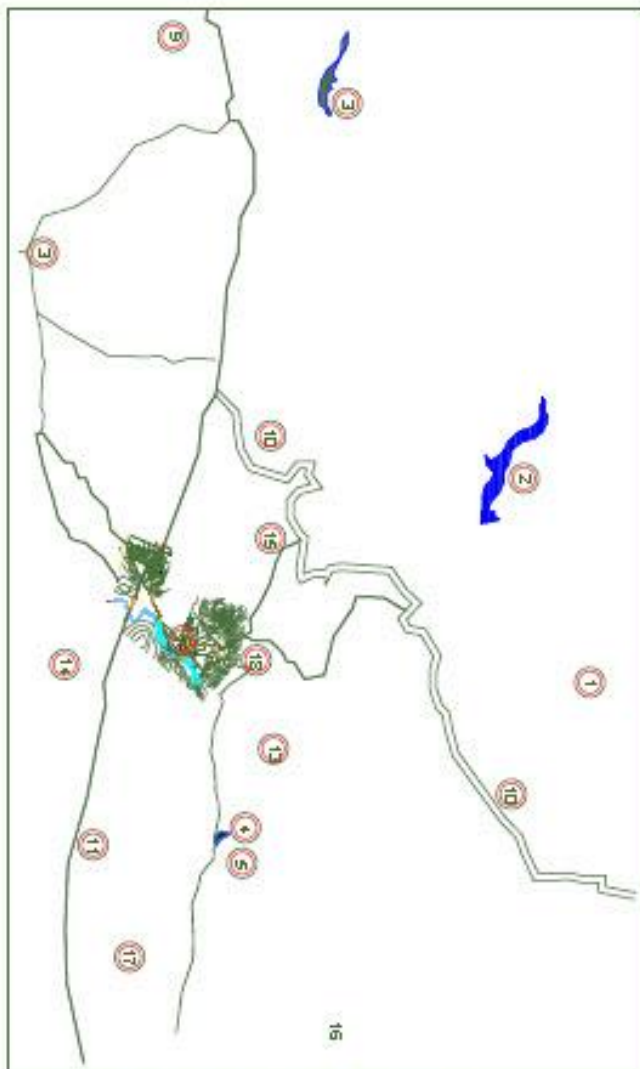
Rivers have been contributed to the prosperity of agriculture and gardening led to the creation of the landscapes, beautiful resort areas in the region. Grow crops in the region are common and lush gardens and green meadows and high quality are the most important features around the city of Damavand. The agricultural products are apple, Cherry, green vegetables, wheat, hay, pear and other fruits, walnuts, potatoes, green beans.

Figure10. Ahmad-Abad, Farmland



3.3.1. Map of Ecotourism attractive places

Most ecotourism attractions around the city and inside the county is showed in the map of attractions.



- Map of Natural-Historic Attractions
Damavand, Iran**
- 1 Mount Damavand
 - 2 Dam of Lar
 - 3 Dam
 - 4 Lake Tar
 - 5 Lake Haur
 - 6 City center
 - 7 Jameh Mosque
 - 8 Ghelbi Tower
 - 9 To Tehran
 - 10 Tehran-Hamad Road
 - 11 Tehran Fardoush Road
 - 12 Chehreh Abnirad spring
 - 13 Castle
 - 14 Castle
 - 15 Abad Bak Resort
 - 16 Zainkoun Mountain
 - 17 Mine of Sila
 - 18 Andani Cemetery



3.4. Basic Characteristics of Damavand

Base plan methodology includes a variety of parameters which are evaluated below:

a) City size and form

- The radius (R) measured in kilometers which circumference inscribes approximately 70% of municipal population is shown below in order to determine the scale and the distance to the urban center.
- The straight line (L) between the most extreme points of consolidated urban nucleus of the city is plotted and measured in kilometers.
- Topographic bench marks at one kilometer interval, in the “L”.

Figure11. Length and radius of the city



b) City size and density

- Damavand County includes Damavand city, Rudehen city and rural areas. The total area of Damavand County is 188000 ha, but more than 83% is known as natural resources and 16% belongs to rural areas by the usage of rural buildings, farms, etc. Rural surface area (RU) of the city is about 31960 ha. Finally the legal urban

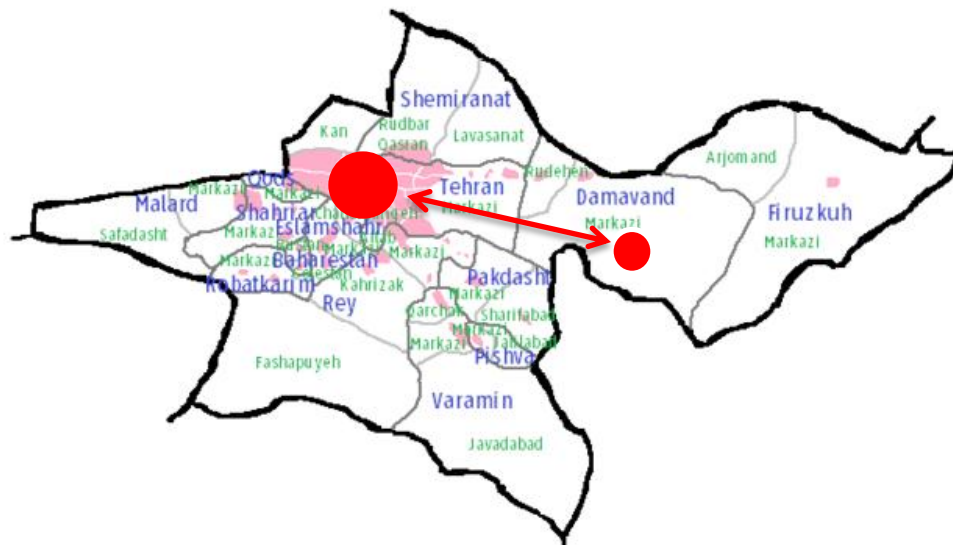
surface area of Damavand (SU) including 17 neighborhoods which is limited by urban boundary is 2442 ha.

Considering the large amount of gardens and farms inside the urban area of Damavand, calculating the net density should be done with subtracting them. Gross Urban land per capita based on 2011 population survey is 530 m^2 .

- The total population of Damavand County in 2011 was 100700 which 27,445 people lives in city of Roudehen. So, the population of urban area of Damavand (Pu) in 2011 was 46,052 in 10,679 families.
- Population of rural area (Pr) is 27,200.
- Gross Density of urban area is (Du) 19 (Hb/Ha) it seems high but the reason is high ratio of gardens inside urban area.
- Gross Density of Rural area (Dr) is 0.8 (Hb/Ha).

c) The city and its urban “hinterland”

Figure12. Location of Damavand in province of Tehran



- The radius of influence of Damavand is approximately 28 kilometers.

Figure13. Damavand in transport network



- Municipalities within its area are: Damavand (as center the Damavand County and Roudheh).
- Total population of the county of Damavand is 100,700.
- The distance between Damavand and 2 nearest big cities:
 - Damavand- Tehran: 65 kilometers. Population of Tehran is about 8,300,000 and the population of metropolitan area is about 14 million.
 - Damavand- Firouzkouh: 81 km. the population of Firouzkouh is 37,416.

There is a fact that the location of Damavand in vicinity of the metropolitan of Tehran is an important factor which should be considered in all planning processes.

d) Network of services and its infrastructure

- The percentage of the urban surface covered by networks of drinkable water is approximately 100% which purified from underground water resources and the local river.
- There is not an artificial urban sewage system. Private waste wells are obligatory in all residential buildings for wastewater and sewage.

There are two rivers which join together inside the city and make Damavand River. This river acts as a main natural canal for flow and drainage. Also there are nine floodways with their standard boundaries (4-6 meters each side). Surface water and drainage is conducted by the river, canals and streams along the streets and go in the direction of south and finally leading out of the city to the dam Mamlou.

- Public lighting and electrical grids cover approximately all the urban surface area.
- Frequency of street cleaning is daily.
- Refuse collection is daily.
- Selective refuse collection in Damavand started in 2008 and it's doing weekly.

- Refuse treatment and recycling in Damavand is almost new and it's in the process by participation of two private companies, but it's not performed yet.

e) Territorial infrastructure

- Nearest airports located in Tehran. Domestic airport located in the west of Tehran with about 75 km distance. International airport is in the south of Tehran more than 100 km far from Damavand.
- There is not a rail station in Damavand. Nearest active station located in Firouzkouh which located in the railway of Tehran to the North of Iran. In this railway pass 1-3 trains daily. This station could potentially use by a domestic train with the destination of Damavand.
- The Distance between Damavand and nearest Metro station of Tehran is 63 Km.
- Public transportation in Damavand includes bus and minibus mainly to the direction of Tehran and also to other destinations.
- Public transportation inside the city is done by bus and minibus. Also there is public taxi with a specified origin and destination with 4 passenger capacity.

f) Network of free spaces and green areas

To identify the percentage of the urban surface that is not destined for construction, boundaries for nine different Watercourses and the river could be calculated as free spaces which are not allowed to build. Approximately 70% of urban area (1712 ha) belong to private gardens and farms; obviously it's a high amount. Urban landper capita(total net andgross), based on2011populationestimatesis 530m², while theper capitaretis 213m.

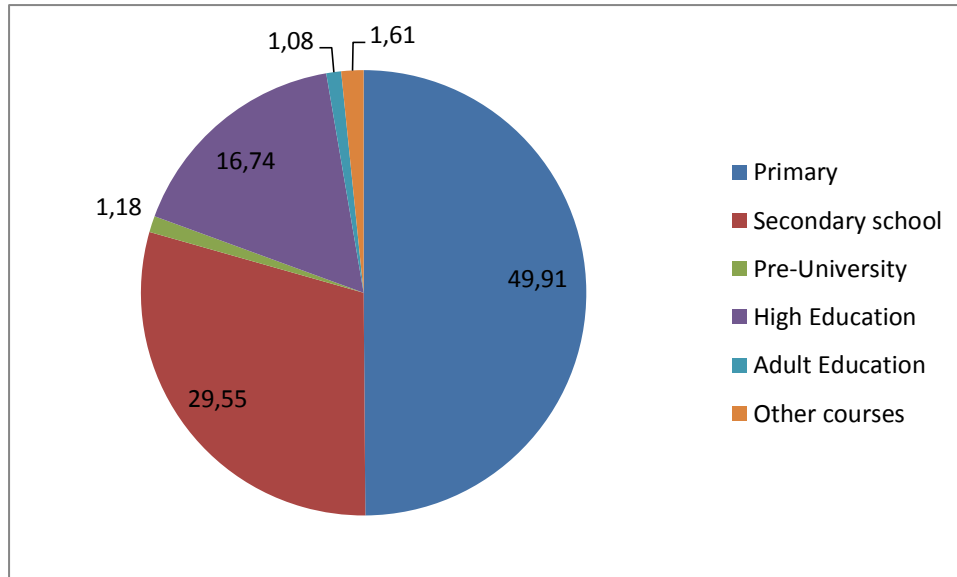
Public Green and open spaces areas including parks around and inside the city is 10.5 ha (2.2 m² per capita) which is so lower than standards.

g) Levels of urban equipment

Socio-cultural structure:

- Number of university students and graduated of universities in total is 5087 which the number of women in this group is 2603 it means more than 55% of students are women.

Figure 14. Literacy status and educational level in Damavand County



- Number of public libraries: 3
- Number of secondary education institutes: 24
- Number of indoor public sports pavilion: 12

Health care:

- There is a general hospital with 46 active beds and 2 other polyclinics. The number of Primary health clinics and first aids centers is 6.
- Other public equipment: there are 4 malls and hundreds stores for retail. Also there is an amusement park and one indoor amusement park.

h) Government

The type of government of Iran is central. There is 31 provinces and each province has a governor also each county has one local governor. The county of Damavand has a governor who works as responsible body for management of territory including the urban and rural areas.

There is a City Council with 5 councilors who elected by citizens. It chooses the Mayor of the city and approves developing projects for the city and supervises the Municipality's activities. Municipality of Damavand as a part of Damavand County' government is responsible to manage urban problems and development.

i) Annual municipal budget

The budget of municipality comes from government to the mayor of the city. It is separated in 2 parts: projects and current management costs. In 2012 the annual Budget of municipality of Damavand in 2012 was 200,000,000,000 Rials. (\$ 16.3 million)

In the municipal budget law, 60 percent is defined for civil and development projects and 40 percent of that is predicted for the current issues including maintenance and municipal issues.

The annual budget per capita is \$ 354. A comparison between this factor in other cities in the province didn't show a significant difference. But in comparison with the cities in the other provinces, Damavand is a richer city. It could be defined as a city with more budgets.

j) Type of intermediate city

Considering the great effect of Tehran on its surrounding cities, and relations between it and Damavand could be said that Damavand is a medium-sized city on the periphery of the metropolis of Tehran. But on the other hand, Damavand has its own economic activities especially in agriculture.

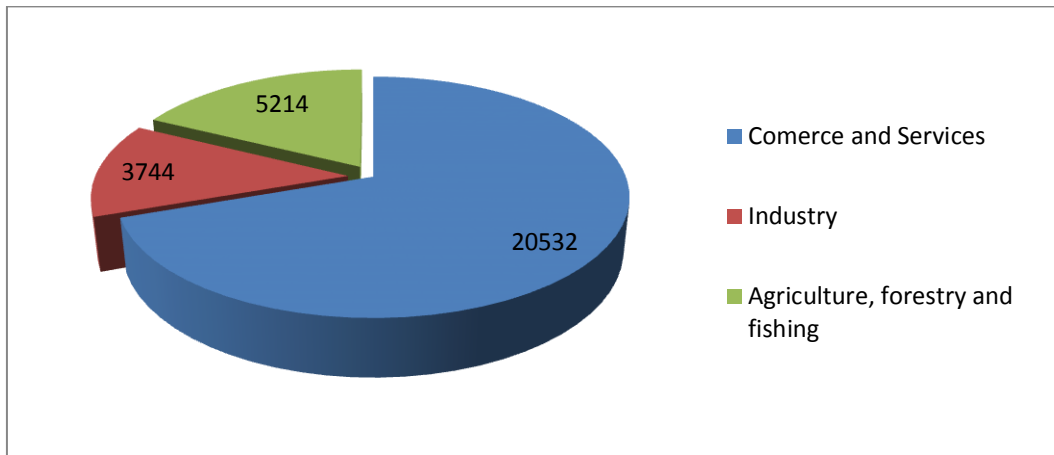
k) Economic activity

Based on the results of national census in 2011, "commerce and services" has the highest employment but it's for county of Damavand including urban and rural population. There is not an independent census result for the city but the documentation of general plan of Damavand shows that, the largest number of employment in the city is in the sector of commerce and services.

- Employment structure

Employment structure by the division between primary (agriculture), secondary (industries) and tertiary sectors (commercial and services) is shown in the chart below. Based on the census definitions, the population of housewives has been counted in the sector of commerce and services.

Figure15. Employment Structure of Damavand



Based on the census, there are 367 employments in direct relation with Tourism which means 1% of total population.

- Rate of unemployment

Based on the census in 2011, the rate of unemployment except housewives and students is approximately 3%.

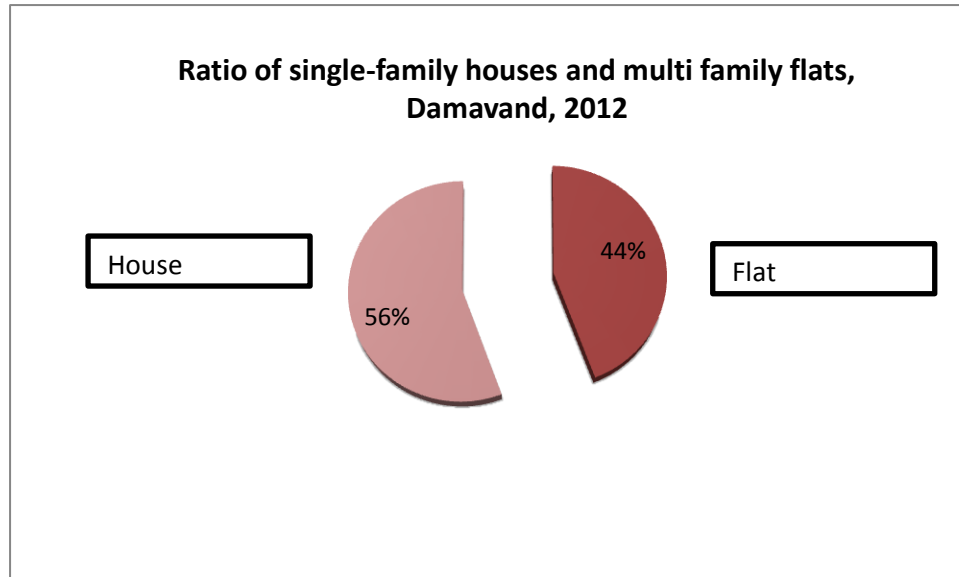
The major economic problems that have emerged in cities with high and low intensity are Input high unemployment, low income families, focusing deprivation, Reduction of Public services, infrastructure services and environmental degradation is decreased.

About Unemployment rate of active population in General urban plan of Damavand is described that "Despite a considerable part of the population of Damavand doesn't enter the labor market, nearly one third of potential active population work and take a role in labor supplied to the economy of the city. However, employment opportunities and the economic system are not sufficient to be able to provide a job for a considerable part of the active population which are studying or stay at home as a housewife and there is not the possibility of achieving job for jobseekers in close future".

I) Housing

The total number of housing units in the county of Damavand is 29700 which based on the population of City of Damavand; in 2013 it could be 11500 to 12500 units in the urban area.

Figure16. Ratio of Single-family house and flats of Damavand, 2012



- In Damavand County approximately 44% of housing units are flats and 56% of them are single family houses.
- 3% of buildings are worn outs and older than 45 years. There is not a significant and obvious slum in the city also there is not a considerable number of homeless people.
- All the urban area covered by electricity network.

m) Monuments or building that most clearly symbolize the city

The most important object which the name of the city is comes from that, is mount Damavand. It's an active volcano and the highest peak in Iran and the whole of Middle East. It has a special place in Persian mythology and folklore. City of Damavand is one of starting stations for mountaineers in direction to the Damavand peak. However it could prepare more facilities for this type of tourists.



Other important monuments in or around the city are listed below:

- Jame mosque (15th century)

The Congregation mosque of Damavand is an historical mosque in the city of Damavand. Built in 1409 CE, the mosque includes traces of Sassanid architecture.



- Shebeli Tower is a monument has been built in 12th century, located in city center.



- Cheshmeh A'la is a famous spring of mineral water located about 4 km in north of the city of Damavand.

Damavand County contains 37 historical holy tombs, 27 castle ruins, 23 traditional houses of architectural significance, 18 traditional bath houses, 6 caves, 5 historical bridges, 3 historical mosques, and 3 Caravanserais.

n) Most important urban projects carried out the last 10 years

- Construction of social housing called Project of Mahak containing 3000 units.
- Construction of socialhousing (3000 units) in Roudehen, Absard and Ab'ali Urban areas out of the city of Damavand
- Repair and covering Roudehen- Damavand road
- Establishment and development of Islamic Azad University from 2002. It's still developing more.
- Covering and repairing two main boulevards of the city (Gilavand and Be'sat)
- AstronomicalObservatory in city center
- Reconstruction of *Sevom Shaban* Hospital in city center
- Construction of industrial Cold storage for protein

o) Observations concerning the contents of the General UrbanPlan (GUP)

Current plan for Damavand is a general urbanplan which is done during 7 recent years and its results entered into force from 2011.

In the general urban plan, the main issues are bolded are:

- Study and suggestions for future Infrastructure including a sport complex, hospital, some changes in transportation network,
- Some methods for increasing income of municipality via construction taxes,
- Definition of urban boundary

p) Most important projects currently being undertaken (or planned for the immediate future based on General Urban Plan)

- Continuing the construction of social housing in the project of Mahak (2000 more units are constructing)
- Developing some buildings and laboratories in Islamic Azad university of Damavand

- Repairing the pathways
- Recreational park in front of Shebeli historic tower (This project is selected in base plan)
- Construction of park Kowsar with the area of 25000 m² in the east of the city
- Construction of Park Farhangian with an area of about 5 hectares in south of the city
- Construction of main public library in city center
- Project of separation drinking water and urban water supplying system
- Construction of theme park in south of the city (This project is selected in base plan)

3.5. Strategic Planning approach in Damavand

Strategic planning is a method for definition of strategies and in this regard, SWOT analysis is being commonly used as a Tool. Strategic planning is selected in present research by focusing on ecotourism in urban planning. The matrix of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats of Damavand in relation to Tourism development projects are prepared below. The main objective of this matrix is to analyze internal strategic factors, strengths and weaknesses attributed to the Tourism development plan, and to predict external factors beyond control of the plan such as opportunities and threats.

3.5.1 SWOT matrix

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Easy access and position in the area	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positioned in the south of Alborz mountain, on the priority axis of the Tehran- Mazandaran transport network• Positioned on the proximity of Tehran capital and access to its high quality infrastructure• Access to highways in north and south of the city	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative increase of the population and young people's migration• Absence direct access of railroad to the city• Lack of sufficient public parking areas
Economic development/tourism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Natural and historical attractive sites inside the county• Non Seasonal character of tourist activities• Possibility of Tehran as the main tourism market for Damavand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of investments/sustainable economic activities and jobs• Absence of constant revenue sources for municipality to implement its development projects• Lack of licensed tourist activities• Lack of active tourism promoting measures• Lack of managed leisure activities• Poaching activities• Lack of regulated economic activities related to tourism

Providing infrastructure and services

- Existence of a water and sewage system
- Paving/rehabilitating the main roads
- Educational infrastructure
- High Number of university graduates
- Infrastructure systems (water, sewage, heating, roads, waste management) cover the entire urban area
- fine urban health services (both for inhabitants and tourists)
- Lack of standard Hotels and other tourism facilities
- Infrastructure systems (specially sewage, heating and waste management) do not cover the entire rural areas
- Lack of train station (indirect access to railroad network)
- Lack of camping areas and other temporary settlements
- Lack of internet access in some rural areas

Natural and built environment

- History, heritage – authenticity and uniqueness
- Natural environment generated by the Lake Tar (for tourism and fishing)
- Climate conditions favourable to tourism in the summer
- Natural environment of surrounding mountains
- Poor state of rural roads
- Livestock grazing in pastures
- Lack of health services in villages
- Lack of local Mountain rescue station
- Poor state of some historic buildings

Local public / State sector administration and Social Factors

- Existence of village Council including elected resident people for administration projects
- Existence of City Council
- Legal permit for municipality to start some small projects with annual budget
- Lack of a special unit for implementing externally funded projects
- Lack of active social NGOs
- Lack of public awareness of tourism and environment
- Lack of local newsletter
-

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

Ease of access and position in the area

- Increase of access and mobility by
- Increase of population/immigration

- | | |
|---|---|
| public transportation in the area | from other cities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of Access of tourists from capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of road Traffic problems |

Economic/Tourism development

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing of tourist activities based on the existing built and natural potential • Implementing a tourism licensing system • Development of the local tourism market • Creation of Job opportunities specially for young educated people • Reducing labour migration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition with other tourist destinations in the province • Lack of tourism infrastructure such as hotels • Increase of immigration to Damavand |
|--|---|

Providing infrastructure and services

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using renewable (alternative) energy – for public lighting, heating and public transport (electric cars, electric leisure ships), to obtain the ECO status for the town • Development of transport system due to a high tourist income and solicitation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease of tourist attraction due to the poor provision of public utilities and service • Freezing of Rural roads in winter • Decrease of tourist attraction due to the poor state of some historic sites |
|--|--|

Natural and built environment

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built environment that can be rehabilitated – offers venues for trade and leisure activities • More attention to conservation of natural environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of pollution in the nature due to a weak environmental management • Destruction of fisheries and hunting fund due to poaching • Complete degradation of built heritage |
|---|---|

Local public administration

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governmental financial assistance • Developing the capacity of municipality in implementing the integrated plan for urban development (the general urban plan (GUB), regulation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diminishing of financial resources available for implementing the projects |
|---|--|



CHAPTER 4

RESULTS and CONCLUSION

4.1. Base Plan

Based on methodology, the map of base plan is prepared. Zones that are considered probable and/or necessary to urbanise in the short or medium term are also zones of urban extension. As possible zones of urban reserve, in other words, those that could be urbanised would be or should be in the medium to long term.

Regarding to current urban condition, priorities in GUP (General Urban Plan of Damavand, 2007) and the aim of Tourism, most important projects for next 10 years are suggested in following proposal.

4.1.1 Suggested Urban Projects for next 10 years

Focusing on results of SWOT analysis, the most urban projects are suggested in the Base plan.

1. Hotel and Restaurant

The lack of hotel shows that normally by vicinity to Tehran, most visitors to Damavand are using Hotels and facilities of Tehran and there is no any hotel inside of Damavand. So, instruction of standard hotels is an urgency regarding tourism planning.

2. Museum

The lack of city museum in current situation is the lack of an information center. A museum keeps of the identity of city with all natural, historical and anthropologic factors. Furthermore, it shows Attractions, give visitor information, events schedule, and information on group activities and facility rentals. As Silier in 2010 declared: "City museums reflect the historical process of the city from past to present. They are institutions that transmit the city's social structure neighborhood culture and the traditional concept of community to future generations. It is the pioneer to studies that are done for a better recognition of the city and for protection of cultural heritage. It is a communication and culture center providing social unity developing respect and empathy." Values of tangible and intangible cultural heritage create identity and cultural heritage of communities. In order to preserve the heritage of cultural and natural heritage firstly this heritage must be determined and certified. These museums allow the formation of new communication networks that will provide accurate reading of the urban heritage protection and urban existence, by preparing a breakdown of the city's cultural heritage. It also performs visual history writing (Collins, 1995) (Madran, 2001)

3. Restoration of Shebeli Tower

This historic tower needs attention to remain for future generation and it needs a restoration and rehabilitation. It should be considered that the historic monuments as the most attractive places in

urban tourism. There is an obligation to take attention in their maintenance, reserving and restoration projects.

4. Theme Park

Theme park does not exist yet and currently is defined as one of future projects in GUB. In base plan also it could be mentioned as one of projects towards a city with more facility. The location is chose close to southern city entrance and highway in a renovation residential area. This park is predicted in the current General Urban Plan and would be the unique theme park of the city. The location could be in the southern part of the city which is distanced from city center in transformation zone. The location is defined by 3 elements:

- Having a good access to main roads and streets.
- Having a good connection with Main Street of the city
- Locating in a new residential zone without the limitations of city center

5. Camping Area

Ecotourism potential of this county by many natural destinations around the city, like Mount Damavand and some caves could attract more tourists to this region. In current situation, the lack of simple facilities is one of weakness about tourism. So providing a Camping area could be useful for some ones who want to relax for one or several nights and would be a start station for adventure and natural activities.

The location is suggested in north of the city and close to the roads which are leading to Mount Damavand and Lake Tar.

6. Local products Market

Some agricultural products of this city are famous because of its high quality, being organic and special flavors. These products are:

- Golden apple of Damavand
- Mineral water
- Cherries
- Yoghourt and buttermilk

At the moment there are not too many tourists and visitors in the city, these products are carried to Tehran and other destinations. By defining a local product market and attracting more tourists and visitors would be a positive factor in economic condition of the city.

7. Handicrafts Market

A handicraft market brings benefits to local people and tourists.

- As a market, clearly it improves local economy.
- It will provide an exhibition of local and traditional arts
- It will make some job vacancies directly and indirectly

8. Transport Terminal

At the moment city does not have an organized terminal and citizens go to Tehran to use its high quality transporting facilities.

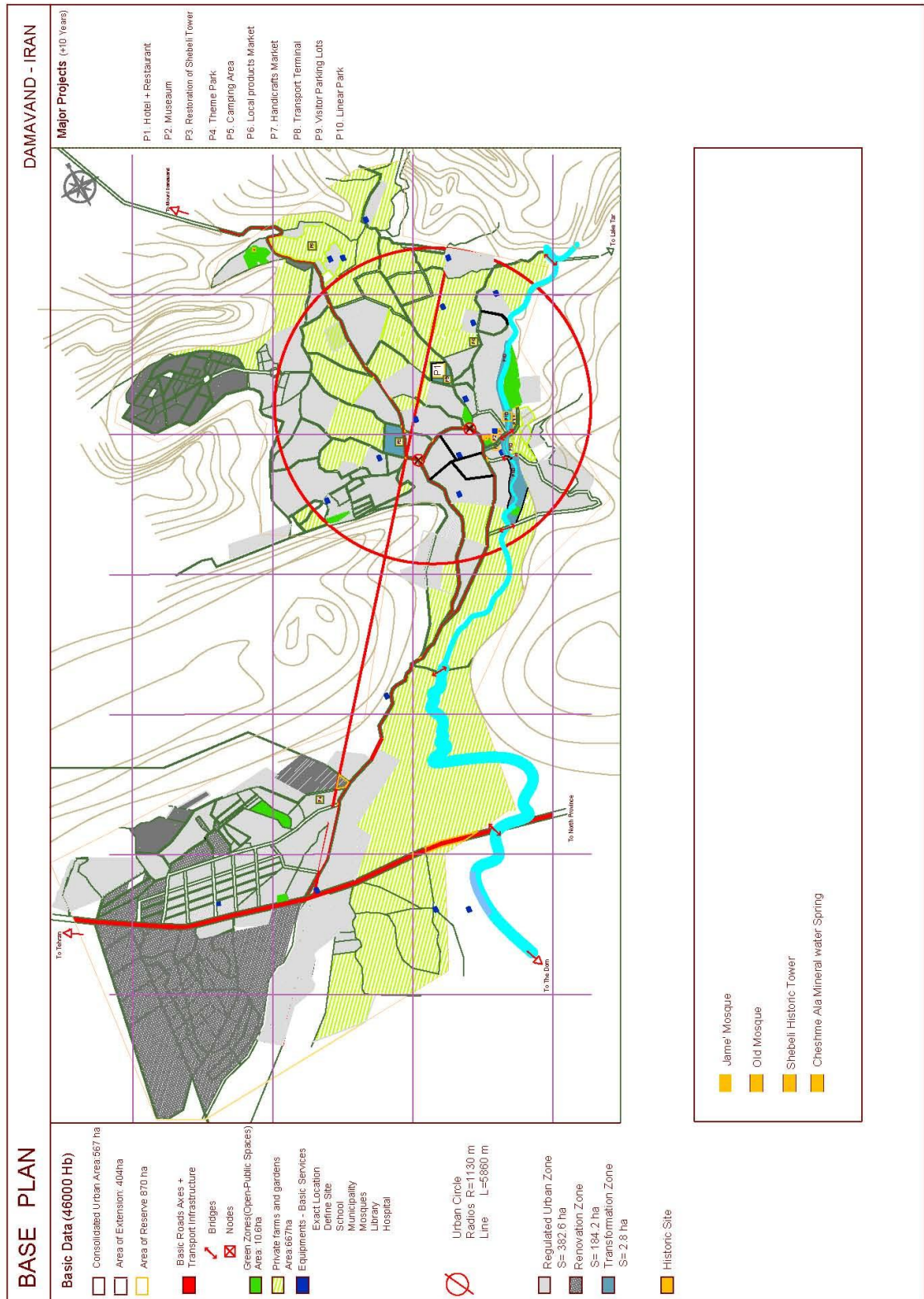
Building a bigger terminal with possibility of locating transport agencies could help the city to be more independent in transport system. Location of this terminal is suggested beside a traffic node which is not far from city center.

9. Visitor Parking Lots

The structure of city center which is known as old town has limitation in open space and wide streets for parking lots, so a parking lot is suggested in vicinity with historic monuments in city center. It's also close to the suggested area of hotel and restaurants.

10. Linear Urban Park

The area of Green public spaces is approximately $2.4 \text{ m}^2 / \text{person}$. In comparison with a standard, which is $10 \text{ m}^2 / \text{person}$, there is a lack of public green spaces on the other hand, the river inside the city could be a valuable potential for a linear park. So, a linear park is suggested in the river banks.



4.2. Urban Sustainability and Tourism Development

The sustainability and sustainable development is known as an ultimate issue in urban planning projects. As Timothy declared in 1999, Keeping the city compact and fighting urban sprawl, as well as creating a distinct separation between urban and rural areas, are key factors to sustainable land use planning and urban form. Moreover, it is important that a city create walk able neighborhoods, have good public transit, and in general, rely less on the automobile. In this regard, in the Base Plan factors of sustainability are considered in strategic planning matrix of SWOT and in final proposal of projects which has a vision that promotes interconnected green space, transportation system, and mixed-use development. Diverse public and private partnerships should be used to create sustainable and livable communities that protect historic, cultural, and environmental resources. In addition, policymakers, regulators and developers should support sustainable site planning and construction techniques that reduce pollution and create a balance between built and natural systems.

New sustainable urban developments or re-developments should provide a variety of commercial, institutional, educational uses as well as housing styles, sizes and prices. Regarding to Tourism and specially Eco-tourism development, urban planning and sustainability is faced with several debates.

- Sustainability and Energy

One particular part of this debate concerns the role of cities as major consumers of energy and generators of pollution. Some others are focusing on the prospects for using changes to transport and urban form to reduce energy consumption. In this debate, some intermediate cities like Damavand had to be planned in some way more energy efficient by empowering public transport and train station. In the Base plan of Damavand, by a strategic planning approach a Transport Terminal is suggested but it's a short step towards sustainability in transport.

- Sustainability and Transportation

Most weight on transportation system in Damavand is on personal vehicles but the personal automobile is not part of sustainable transportation and mobility. A sustainable approach provides mobility options and helps reduce pollution by reducing vehicle trips. Walking, bicycling, and other mobility options should be encouraged throughout the urban mixed-use core and mixed-use neighborhoods with easily accessed and well-defined. Instead, sustainable transportation options place an emphasis on fast, comfortable and reliable public transportation; some combination of rail

and bus could be considered in short and medium time planning. In this regard, in the Base plan, developing a terminal is suggested.

- Sustainability and Environment

Iran is an early achiever of the phase out milestones set by the Montreal protocol. Based on UNDP' report, the Iran'5th National Development Programme has adopted the environmental assessment of strategic level plans policies and plans as well as a countrywide "ecosystem-based approach" to the management of wetlands and biodiversity.

In the part of Environmental issues, there are many objectives and consideration in wild life reservation, Waste disposal and protection of natural environment which will be faced with tourism activities.

-Sustainability and Economic Resources

Municipality by depending to national budget is not self funded but there are some articles in the law which conducts cities to be independent and to have their own income. In this issue, Tourism can act by attracting capital and economic activitiesand would empower the municipality concluding to be self-funded.

- Sustainability and cultural heritage

A Conceptual Planning by empowering the identity of the City benefits on conserving the local cultural characteristics such as accent, traditions and conservation the historic monuments.

Tourism by its dependence and emphasizing on historic and cultural heritages could be helpful in taking attention to conservation and supporting activities.

4.3. The problem of Tourism and Ecotourism

Urban Tourism and Ecotourism development in this city is a new approach which never has beenconsidered as an issue in planning processes and it's an important factor in its socio-economic characteristics; so it needs an analysis. Based on the SWOT matrix, most important problems are divided in two categories: Tourism as general and Ecotourism as nature based activities over the county.

Tourism and Ecotourism facilities, benefits and problems in general are categorized as below:

- Job opportunities and immigration

At the moment Tehran as a megalopolis is the destination of millions people who seeking a job. Based on surveys young people are majority of jobseekers and Damavand has a high percentage of young educated people. Tourism as an industry could provide Job opportunities and increases the population by immigrants. This issue needed a great reserve area for future.

- Access and regional network

In general, train and rail roads are cover a low percentage of transport system in Iran. Public transports mostly includes in personal vehicles, bus and taxis. Increase in Tourism activities inside the city needs more parking areas and wider roads in some parts for the future.

The strategic location of Damavand as an intermediary along the highway of Tehran to North provinces could make it a temporary station for tourists who are going to- or from Tehran. It needs more facilities like camping areas and hotels.

Furthermore, It seems that even Damavand is located in a good network connection in the scale of national, the existence of some infrastructures such as a train station and local airport could made it more connected to the national and global network.

- Investment and funding

Investment is an important factor in the process of development. It's a tool for implementing the plans and projects. After the planning for ecotourism or in line with that, it is important to study on Feasibility and Funding Models which is described as "The first step" in some studied projects.

National budget is not the unique economic resources of the city. As it's declared in the law, municipality could have its own budget from taxes of renovation, reconstruction, etc. Tourism by increasing the economic activities and constructions will cause new benefits for municipality regarding to its self-founding, step by step.

Based on a published interview with the mayor of Damavand, the Absence of constant revenue sources for municipality to implement its development projects is a municipal problem. This matter is bolded also in documents of GUP. Nevertheless, Tourism is not counted as a tool for increasing the municipal budget and there is a lack of regulated economic activities related to tourism.

- Lack of a local organization in Tourism

Regarding to a new target in a city, - in this case Tourism in Damavand-, needs to create responsible body. Lack of licensed Tourism activities, Tourism information agency and lack of supported leisure activities are problems in this target. Also tourism promoting tourism needs

some active means. Studying some cases like Andorra with its professional organizations for tourism and facilities, specify that creating an organization is a strongly needed to pay attention.

-Environmental Problems

Damavand is close to a national park with high value in biodiversity. Illegal hunting of wildlife as “Poaching activities” is a point of risk which could increase in future by increasing the number of visitors.

- Lack of related infrastructure

Based on the map, attractive places in the county for tourism development are located in inside and around the city. In the level of county, a network between different attractive natural and historic places by improving the roads, information kiosks and public participation could be planned. Also the lack of standard Hotels and other tourism facilities is a basic problem in this regard. In transport system, the lack of train station (indirect access to railroad network) is another issue in long term planning.

- Specific Projects of Eco-tourism

Some specific projects should be considered in rural and natural areas which are desired to make more facilities for ecotourism activities.

- Infrastructure systems (especially sewage, heating and waste management) do not cover the entire rural areas, which this matter could have environmental pollution.
- Increase of pollution in the nature due to a weak environmental management
- Destruction of fisheries and hunting fund due to poaching may occur during a weak tourism management.
- The lack of camping areas and other temporary settlements and the lack of internet access in some rural areas are considerable.

In addition, the rapid development of ecotourism in Damavand would likely intensify existing pressures on the landscape and local institutions that are unprepared to deal with these challenges.

4.4. Conclusion

A practical research on the case study of Damavand concluded to following conclusions:

The Base Plan which academically made in present thesis, -even may contain some errors in quantities and details-was an academic experience which focused on the context of an intermediate city in Iran. Different characteristics of the location and policies were studied towards tourism development.

Base plan as the first approach for urban planning, which could be prepared before complicated process of making General Urban Plan, showed that this plan would sum up the planning process in total and would be useful in short-medium term. Also, Base plan, as a basic process could be involved in current urban planning in Iran –which is General Urban Plan following by Comprehensive Plan- and it could have specific advantages.

The presented plan could be an alternative method for urban planning process toward an object like tourism development so that it showed how an object like ecotourism development could be involved in providing a Base plan. In other cities, other objects could be focused on; for example eco city, could be an objective for providing the base plan focusing on.

It could be suggested that in the current planning system, base plan could be a model for other cities in Iran with similar capacity in tourism. Nevertheless this planning model and its feasibility in Iran could be studied in detail and in depth.

In documentation process of Base Plan, it's considerable that by definition the plan as a Local project and focusing on the local characteristics and potential, final plan would be more in accordance with real local needs and potential.

Focusing on more important factors in its structure, it answers the main Necessities but ignores definition of details. This plan shows a perspective for at least 10 years so it could act as a tool for medium-term urban planning.

Even this research is mostly focused on Urban Planning, a review on current urban planning policies (Diagram 1.5), showed the absolute ignorance of people and local government in planning process so that in the approval process, local authorities like city council and mayor of the city have no right to vote. So the matter is not just “planning model” in the case that the approval process is faced with a hierarchy in national and provincial level.

In the field of Tourism Development, Damavand is an intermediate city with some tourist attractions and without a current considerable attention in this field. In methodology of Base plan, important monuments of the city are remarked also by listing the most important projects which could be

tourism related infrastructure; it facilitated taking attention on tourism. In the case of Damavand, The Capacity of base plan towards the tourism development is studied.

Analytical evaluating of urban capacity in line with ecotourism development which showed in SWOT matrix, finally conclude to definition and suggestion of more important projects. This analysis could be a joint method for definition of high priorities projects in providing the base plan in strategic planning approach.

In the case of Damavand, by emphasize on tourism, the necessary infrastructure and facilities like hotels and public transport are listed in the “10 most important projects” of the city. It's found that the methodology of base plan by focusing on urban monuments and historic buildings as an item finally could promote the planners to consider specific characteristics of the city towards Tourism development. Nevertheless it depends on where and in which pattern we are working on this methodology.

In the field of participation, involving the community is a critically important and complex subject for successful community-based ecotourism.

About the planning process in Iran there is a lack of participations in decision-making and benefit-sharing which is practiced in some research based development projects. However this questions rise up: which policies could facilitate and promote participation in decision-making and benefit-sharing? Or how benefit sharing could be a promoter in tourism projects and in community participations?

This question becomes important when the participatory approach is to be applied in developing countries. Although most research is concentrated on the claim that the communities seem not to be well prepared for an active public participatory approach in decision making for tourism in developing countries but it's also mentioned that place specific conditions should be taken to account. (Timothy, 1999)

In the field of tourism, ensuring market realism and effective promotion should be studied in urban economy. Ecotourism projects must be based on an understanding of market demand and consumer expectations and how to place the product offer effectively in the market place. In some studies on market demand, it proved that many visitors are looking for a combination in activities and the mix of natural and cultural experiences. This mixture is suggested in the case of Damavand by tourism and ecotourism activities but it needs more study on local market demand.

There are results that prove the importance of participation for visitors. For example, some visitors value the opportunity to participate in activities (WWF, 2001). In this field, Conservation participation programs are a specific sub-sector of ecotourism and could be community-based.

General experience of village life, including folklore which can prove an experience highly valued by visitors is mentioned in some researches on demand. An incentive could be provided to keep local culture and continue on local values and knowledge. Despite this fact, working with private sector operators – model involving private sector operators- provides some components to more participation.

Leading to an ever-growing tourist number and tourism income in Damavand, a responsible organization is necessary to manage and assessment all developing projects. Existing information and promotional mechanisms regarding to tourism development could improve and accelerate this process.

Sustainability of an urban plan is a complex of numerous elements in planning and management depends on its attention to the local people and their needs. So in the process of making the plan and decision making in Damavand and other cities in Iran, city council as an elected team of people in current legal structure, has the capacity to involve in providing the plan even at the moment it doesn't right to vote in approval of the urban plan.

In addition, the rapid development of ecotourism in Damavand would likely intensify existing pressures on the landscape and local institutions that are unprepared to deal with these challenges.

In total it could be said that this study demonstrates the advantage of strategic planning specially in local state over the central planning (comprehensive/General plan approaches) and central decision making processes.

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Annex 1.

Aerial Photo of Damavand



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Annex2. Main touristic attractions, Damavand county, Iran

